



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development
Rm. 152 Federal Building 100 Centennial Mall North Lincoln, Neb. 68508
(402) 437-5551 (Phone) (402) 437-5093 (TDY) (402) 437-5408 (Fax)

Jan Knobel, Beatrice, Neb. (402) 223-3125 Ext. 4

USDA Rural Development to Hold Energy Meetings

Beatrice, Neb., April 12, 2005 – USDA Rural Development will hold energy meetings in Southeast Nebraska regarding the recently announced \$22.8 million in grant funds available nationwide for Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Projects for small businesses in communities of 50,000 populations or less and to farmers and ranchers. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was published in the March 28, 2005 Federal Register.

Informational energy program meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Thursday, April 21, 2005
 1. Hebron-9:30-11:30 a.m.-Thayer County Courthouse (lower level)
 2. Fairbury-1:30-3:30 p.m.-Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Services Office, 517 F Street
- Friday, April 22, 2005-York-10:00 a.m.-Noon-4-H Building, York County Fairgrounds, 2500 N. Nebraska Ave.
- Monday, April 25, 2005-Red Cloud-1:30-3:30 p.m.-Trailblazers RC & D Conference Room, 437 North Elm
- Wednesday, April 27, 2005-Falls City-1:30-3:30 p.m.-City Hall Conference Room D, 1820 Towle
- Thursday, April 28, 2005-Tecumseh-9:30-11:30 a.m.-Five Rivers RC & D Conference Room, 140 North 4th Street
- Tuesday, May 3, 2005-Aurora-1:30-3:30 p.m.-Bremer Center, 1604 L Street
- Thursday, May 5, 2005
 1. Plattsmouth-10:00-Noon-Cass County Bank Conference Room, 6th & Main
 2. Wahoo-1:30-3:30 p.m. Heritage Inn Hotel, on Highway 77

Additional meetings are being held in other regions of Nebraska. For more information, visit http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/Available_Funds.htm.

Monies are available for Renewable Energy Systems such as wind, solar, biomass, biogas, and geothermal projects. Funding is also available for Energy Efficiency Improvement projects such as improvements to HVAC systems, insulation, refrigeration, lighting, pumping systems, air systems, motor systems, irrigation efficiency improvements, etc. Businesses interested in energy efficiency improvements to their business should consider this program for potential funding assistance. Farmers and ranchers may be assisted with irrigation system energy improvements, methane digesters for livestock waste, grain handling systems, wind turbines, solar systems, etc.

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Grants are available for commercially available or pre-commercially available technologies for up to 25 percent of eligible project costs. Renewable Energy System requests can be considered for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and maximum of \$500,000. Energy Efficiency Improvement requests can be for a grant minimum of \$2,500 and \$250,000 maximum. Applications must be submitted to the USDA Rural Development Beatrice, Neb. Field Office postmarked no later than June 27, 2005.

Complete application information may be obtained by contacting Jan Knobel, USDA Rural Development, 201 N. 25th Street Beatrice, Neb. 68310, (402) 223-3125 ext. 4 or (402) 446-7414.

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